

**After Charlottesville: Bigotry Denounced**

The tragic and offensive events of Charlottesville are only the latest in a series of high profile killings across the world generated by deep selfish bigotry. Whether Barcelona, Paris, Brussels, or London in Europe, or in Asia, South America or other cities of North America we see in graphic and painful realism the effects of fallen human nature dominating and imposing itself on the innocent lives of others.

We are deeply saddened by the pain and hurt these heinous acts cause in the lives of untold numbers of family, friends, and communities. These violent behaviors cannot be allowed to desensitize us to the high calling of God to reflect love, generosity, acceptance and grace.

In the face of such tragedy, the church may naturally seek to express anger at the offense, sadness for the families of the victims, and challenge to meet the needs of those affected. In the midst of these responses, may we be most vigilant to the subtle influence of such extremism on the thinking of the church. May we see these acts for what they truly are – the human heart acting violently and selfishly in evil ways that attempt to assert ideology, religion, preference or power over others in indiscriminate abuse. Whether it is religious fanaticism, racial prejudice, political activism, or institutional dominance these are acts perpetrated at the impulse of the evil one who seeks to steal, kill, and destroy.

May the people of God rise up. May they declare the righteous call of our Holy God to a higher way of love and grace. May our voice be one of truth and one that both confronts offense and offers the hopeful vision of God’s love and holiness.

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Chair

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